

11 Indian Hill Road  
Newington, CT 06111  
Thursday, March 13, 2014

Joint Committee on Public Health  
Room 3000, Legislative Office Building  
Hartford, CT 06106

Dear Members of the Joint Committee on Public Health:

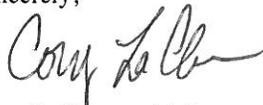
I am asking that you do not support Senate Bill 416, "AN ACT CONCERNING THE DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH'S RECOMMENDATIONS REGARDING ADVANCED EMERGENCY MEDICAL TECHNICIANS." This bill, as proposed, will have negative effects on EMS providers, could bring about potentially devastating outcomes for patients and will undermine a decades-long process to standardize and improve emergency medical services nationwide.

Most EMS providers in the state who practice at the AEMT level took their initial certification courses at their own expense, and take recertification courses and required continuing education also at their own expense. We have invested considerable time, money and effort to build and maintain our skill sets, so that we may provide the best possible care, treatment and outcomes for our patients. Although I work in EMS as a part time career, I certainly did not take AEMT training to earn extra money... I took it because I want to be able to provide better care to my patients. Since Connecticut still follows the 1985 EMT-Intermediate standard for its AEMT's, the additional interventions that I can provide are, presently, very limited. If Connecticut were to adopt the AEMT standard as outlined in the National Scope of Practice, the amount of additional treatments and interventions that I could potentially provide to my patients would be greater, which would, of course, improve patient outcomes. If Senate Bill 416 is passed, however, this will not be a possibility. With the passage of Senate Bill 416, interventions and treatments that AEMT-level providers can administer to the sick and injured in Connecticut will no longer be available, and AEMT's will be forced to operate at a lower level of care, with fewer treatments and interventions available to the sick and injured of Connecticut. It goes without saying that we want Connecticut's EMS providers to have all the tools and treatments possible to provide the best possible care to those who live in, work in and visit our state.

In 1996, the National Highway Transportation Safety Administration released the *EMS Agenda for the Future*. This consensus document was developed by a steering committee made up of personnel from NHTSA, the Health Resources and Services Administration, Maternal and Childhood Health Bureau, as well as officials from hospitals, higher education and state Offices of Emergency Medical Services, nationwide. One of the members of the steering committee who drafted this document was the Chief of Field Services of Connecticut's Office of Emergency Medical Services (NTSA 87). The *EMS Agenda for the Future* outlined the committee's recommendation for a future approach to EMS. Subsequent follow up documents were released in the years that followed, which elaborated on the work done by the original committee, including the *EMS Education Agenda for the Future: A Systems Approach* in 2000, *National EMS Core Content* in 2004 and *National Scope of Practice Model* in 2007. In the introduction to the *National Scope of Practice Model*, it is stated that one of the goals of the *EMS Education Agenda for the Future* was to allow for the, "development of a system to support the education, certification and licensure of entry-level EMS personnel that facilitates national consistency," (NHTSA 3). According to their respective OEMS websites, several surrounding states, including Massachusetts, New Hampshire, Vermont, Rhode Island and New York have adopted the AEMT Scope of Practice, moving towards the ultimate goal of "national consistency" and, of course, better patient care. It seems counterintuitive that Connecticut would drop the AEMT level, thereby undermining this goal of "national consistency" that a top official from its own Office of Emergency Medical Services helped to set in 1996.

Connecticut's EMS system has, since its inception, provided those who live, work and visit here with superior pre-hospital care. Working in synergy with other elements of our public health system, it has saved countless lives. By voting against Senate Bill 416, members of the Joint Committee on Public Health, you can help Connecticut to join other states in working towards a goal of "national consistency" in EMS. In addition, you will allow Connecticut to keep its EMS system as strong as possible, by allowing a greater number of providers with higher-levels of training to continue to provide the best possible patient care.

Sincerely,



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References:

United States of America. National Highway Traffic Safety Administration. *EMS Agenda for the Future*. Washington, D.C.: US Government Printing Office , 1996. Print.

United States of America. National Highway Traffic Safety Administration. *National EMS Scope of Practice Model*. Washington, D.C.: US Government Printing Office , 2007. Print.